

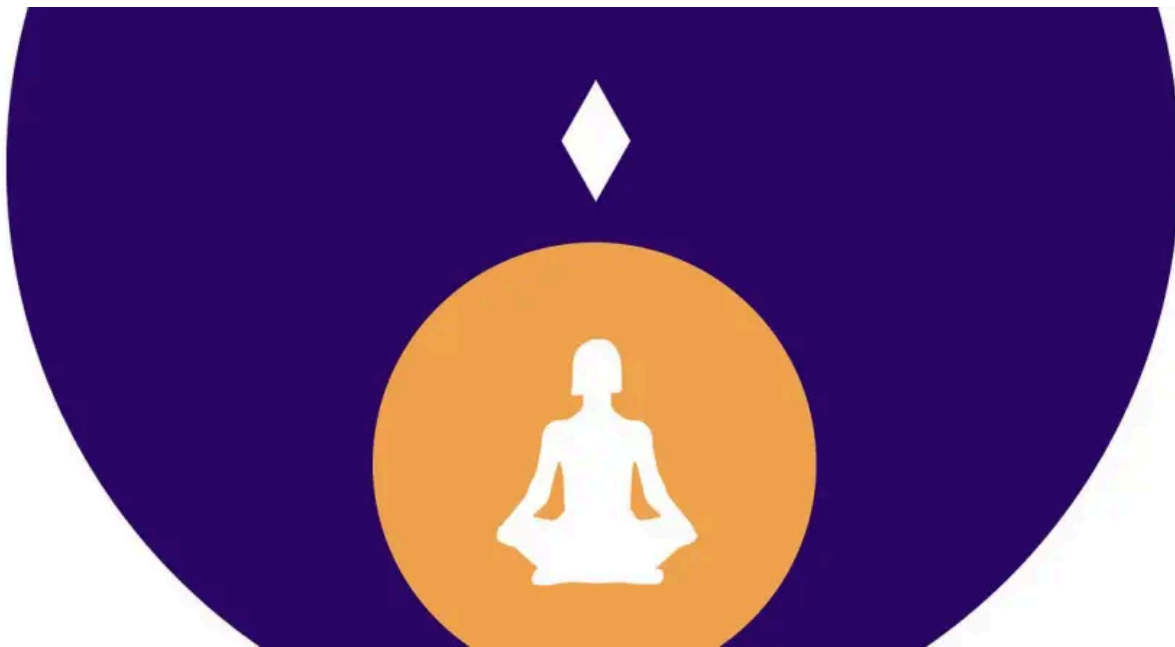


Free Your Body w/Yoga

Dharma Seeds Yoga ~ LGBTQ+ focused, Trauma-Informed, Accessible, Ability Injury Minded

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Meditation: The first step on the road to mindfulness.



by [Deva Hardeep Singh](#) | [Dharma Seeds Yoga Press](#)© | 03 June 2023



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Thus, during the fourth century, the empty areas around Egyptian cities continued to attract others from the world over, wishing to live in solitude. As the lifestyle developed, these men and women developed a reputation for holiness and wisdom. In its early form, each hermit followed more or less an individual spiritual program, perhaps learning some basic practices from other monks, but developing them into their own unique (and sometimes highly idiosyncratic) practice. Later monks, notably Anthony the Great, Pachomius, and Shenouda the Archimandrite, developed a more regularized approach to desert life and introduced some aspects of community living (especially common prayer and meals) that would eventually develop into cenobitic monasticism. Many individuals who spent part of their lives in the Egyptian desert went on to become important figures in the Church and society of the fourth and fifth centuries, among them Athanasius of Alexandria, John Chrysostom, John Cassian, and Augustine of Hippo. Through the work of these last two, the spirituality of the desert fathers, emphasizing an ascent to God through periods of purgation and illumination that led to unity with the Divine, deeply affected the spirituality of the Western Church and the Eastern Church. For this reason, the writings and spirituality of the desert fathers are still of interest to many people today. In fact Fr. Thomas Keating's work with Contemplative Organization's, Centering Prayer. As well as the prior work of Fr. Thomas Merton both of these great meditation innovators were within the past 100 years if not 60.





Coptic icon of Saint Anthony the Great, the father of Eastern monasticism

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method to seek enlightenment. In this form, it traveled first through the Eastern world as Chinese Chan Buddhist monks and missionaries brought their religion and the practice of meditation to new lands. In Japan, the practice was taken to an extreme. Converts to Buddhism began to adopt the religion and created a new variant known as Zen. Zen teaches that the way to enlightenment is through meditation and non-action. This meditation often takes the form of focusing on particular phrases designed to reinforce particular aspects of the Buddhist faith. One of the most famous of these saying or koans is if a tree falls in the woods and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound? The meditator is expected to focus on the koan and allow it to lead him or her to new ways of thinking and conceiving the world.

The important takeaway from this historical perspective is the concept of meditation to awaken our original connection to our Creator. This concept permeated all cultures and all man-made religious faiths. As Joseph Campbell extolled in the 60s it's this cultural ethos of ethnocentric customs.

Historically shown through these examples show meditation is shared with Buddhist, Indian, Jewish, Sufis, and Sikhs (Simram). While not expressly a meditation practice, the participation of Muslims in their form is just as effective.

There is no prescribed method of mindfulness exercise in Islam like there is for daily ritual prayers. This is a voluntary activity that complements the obligatory acts of worship, although it incorporates acts of worship including remembrances (dhikr) and supplications (dua').

Meditation leads to mindfulness, mindfulness leads to yoga, and yoga leads to the healing of our trauma. (**reframe:** *karma. Karma is not that we invited trauma into our lives as children, rather, part of our human experience in this present life. It is burning off karma collected in previous lives. Our mere existence on this planet is to return to our Creator. It is within this frame I refer to karma=trauma*)

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THE
MIND
CAN BE
YOUR
BEST FRIEND
OR YOUR
WORST
ENEMY

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Pre-Caution

While engaging in any **yoga activities**, always remember:

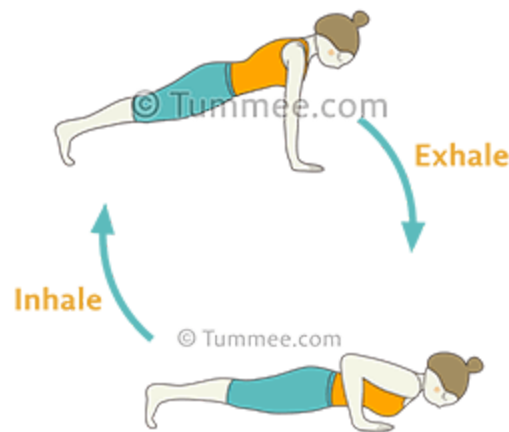
- **Listen to your body.** Don't push yourself too hard, and be sure to **modify poses as needed**.
- **Use props to help you.** Props can be a great way to **make poses more accessible** and to reduce the risk of injury.
- **Take breaks.** If you're feeling tired or sore, take a break from your practice.
- **Don't be afraid to ask for help.** If you're not sure how to modify a pose or if you have any concerns, ask your instructor for help.

Always listen to your body and modify poses as needed. Also review on our [website](#), our guidance on using Yoga for mental health purposes.

Here are some intermediate yoga poses that can assist with meditation:

- **Plank pose (Chaturanga Dandasana):** This pose strengthens the upper body and core, and it can help to improve focus and concentration. To do plank pose, start in a push-up position with your hands shoulder-width apart and your body in a straight line from your head to your heels. Lower your body until your chest touches the floor, then push back up to the starting position.

Yoga Sequence Builder



Modification 1



- **Boat pose (Navasana):** This pose strengthens the core and spine, and it can help to improve balance and focus. To do boat pose, sit on the floor with your legs extended in front of you. Bend your knees and lift your feet off the floor, keeping your legs together. Lean back slightly and lift your arms overhead, keeping your back straight. Hold for a few breaths, then lower back down to the starting position.

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Modification example of Boat Pose

- **Eagle pose (Garudasana):** This pose is a great way to improve balance and coordination, and it can help to increase focus and concentration. To do eagle pose, stand with your feet hip-width apart. Cross your right ankle over your left knee, and then cross your right arm over your left arm. Bring your hands together in front of your heart, and then press your palms together. Hold for a few breaths, then release and repeat on the other side.

Eagle Pose Garudasana



Modifications for
Garudasana
(Eagle pose)
in a larger body



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Modification suggestions [Link](#)

- **Half pigeon pose (Eka Pada Rajakapotasana):** This pose is a great way to stretch the hip flexors and groin, and it can help to improve balance and focus. To do half pigeon pose, start on your hands and knees. Bring your right knee forward and place it on the floor outside of your right wrist. Extend your left leg back behind you, keeping your left foot flat on the floor. Lean forward and fold your torso over your right leg. Hold for a few breaths, then repeat on the other side.





Modification

- **Bridge pose (Setu Bandhasana):** This pose strengthens the back and core, and it can help to improve focus and concentration. To do bridge pose, lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor. Place your arms at your sides, palms down. Press into your feet and lift your hips off the floor until your body forms a straight line from your shoulders to your knees. Hold for a few breaths, then lower back down to the starting position.



Yoga Bridge Pose Variations with Blocks - Setu Bandhasana With Y...



Yoga Bridge Pose Variations with Blocks – Setu Bandhasana

These are just a few of the many intermediate yoga poses that can assist with meditation. If you are new to yoga, it is important to find a pose that is comfortable

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Meditation is a great way to reduce stress, improve focus, and increase relaxation. Adding yoga poses to your meditation practice can help you to achieve these benefits even more effectively.

Meditation techniques can seem mystical for several reasons. First, they often involve focusing on something that is not physical, such as the breath or a mantra. This can be difficult for people who are used to focusing on the physical world. Second, meditation can lead to experiences that are not easily explained, such as feelings of peace, joy, or oneness. These experiences can be very powerful, and they can make meditation seem like a mystical practice. Finally, meditation is often associated with religious or spiritual traditions, which can add to its mystical aura.

However, it is important to remember that meditation is a scientific practice with a long history of research. There is a growing body of evidence that meditation can have many benefits for physical and mental health, including reducing stress, improving focus, and increasing happiness. So while meditation may seem mystical, it is a real and effective way to improve your well-being.

Why Mantras Are Used With Meditation

Meditation is a practice that has been used for centuries to calm the mind and body. There are many different types of meditation, but one common practice is to use a mantra. A mantra is a word or phrase that is repeated over and over again during meditation.

There are many reasons why mantras are used with meditation. First, mantras can help to focus the mind. When you are meditating, it is easy for your mind to

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and allow you to experience a sense of peace.

Third, mantras can help to promote relaxation. When you meditate, your body releases stress hormones. A mantra can help to promote relaxation and reduce stress levels.

Fourth, mantras can help to improve focus and concentration. When you meditate, you learn to focus your attention on the mantra. This can help you to improve your focus and concentration in other areas of your life.

Fifth, mantras can help to increase self-awareness. When you meditate, you become more aware of your thoughts, feelings, and sensations. This can help you to increase self-awareness and make better choices in your life.

Sixth, mantras can help to connect with the divine. In many spiritual traditions, mantras are seen as a way to connect with the divine. If you are interested in connecting with the divine, a mantra can be a helpful tool.

There are many different types of mantras. Some common mantras include:

- Om
- Shanti
- Peace
- Love
- Light
- One

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If you are new to meditation, it is helpful to start with a short meditation. You can gradually increase the length of your meditations as you become more comfortable with the practice.

To meditate with a mantra, simply find a quiet place to sit or lie down. Close your eyes and relax your body. Begin to repeat your mantra silently or aloud. If your mind wanders, gently bring it back to the mantra. Continue meditating for the desired amount of time.

Meditation with a mantra is a simple and effective way to calm the mind and body. If you are looking for a way to reduce stress, improve focus, and increase relaxation, meditation with a mantra is a great place to start.

Benefits of Mantra Meditation

In addition to the benefits mentioned above, mantra meditation has been shown to have a number of other benefits, including:

- **Reduces anxiety and depression:** Mantra meditation can help to reduce anxiety and depression by calming the mind and body.
- **Improves sleep:** Mantra meditation can help to improve sleep by promoting relaxation and reducing stress levels.
- **Boosts the immune system:** Mantra meditation can boost the immune system by reducing stress levels and promoting relaxation.
- **Increases creativity:** Mantra meditation can increase creativity by helping you to focus your attention and clear your mind.
- **Improves memory:** Mantra meditation can improve memory by helping you to focus your attention and reduce stress levels.



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you like. Some popular mantras include:

- Om
- Shanti
- Peace
- Love
- Light
- One

You can also choose a mantra that is related to your goals or intentions. For example, if you are looking to reduce stress, you might choose a mantra like “I am calm.” Or, if you are looking to improve your focus, you might choose a mantra like “I am focused.”

How to Meditate with a Mantra

Once you have chosen a mantra, you can begin meditating. Here are some simple steps to get you started:

1. Find a quiet place where you will not be disturbed.
2. Sit or lie down in a comfortable position.
3. Close your eyes and relax your body.
4. Begin to repeat your mantra silently or aloud.
5. If your mind wanders, gently bring it back to the mantra.
6. Continue meditating for the desired amount of time.

As you meditate, focus on the sound of your mantra. Pay attention to the way it feels in your body and the way it makes you feel. With practice, you will find that you are able to focus on your mantra for longer periods of time

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here are many scientific articles that have been published on the benefits of meditation. Here are a few examples:

- **A 2017 study published in the journal “JAMA Internal Medicine” found that meditation can help to reduce stress and anxiety.** The study looked at data from over 3,500 people and found that those who meditated for at least 45 minutes per day had lower levels of stress and anxiety than those who did not meditate.
- **A 2018 study published in the journal “Nature Medicine” found that meditation can help to improve sleep quality.** The study looked at data from over 200 people and found that those who meditated for at least 30 minutes per day had better sleep quality than those who did not meditate.
- **A 2019 study published in the journal “Psychological Science” found that meditation can help to improve focus and concentration.** The study looked at data from over 100 people and found that those who meditated for at least 20 minutes per day had better focus and concentration than those who did not meditate.

These are just a few examples of the many scientific studies that have been published on the benefits of meditation. If you are interested in learning more about the benefits of meditation, I encourage you to do some research and find articles that are relevant to your interests.

Resources

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BODY SCAN MEDITATION

1

Sit in a comfortable chair in a dimly lit room.

2

Imagine the outline of your body and slowly trace it in your head.

3

Observe the amount of pressure you're feeling against the chair.

4

Where there is more pressure and where there is less. Be mindful.

5

Start with your head. Work down to your feet. Then back up the other side of your body.

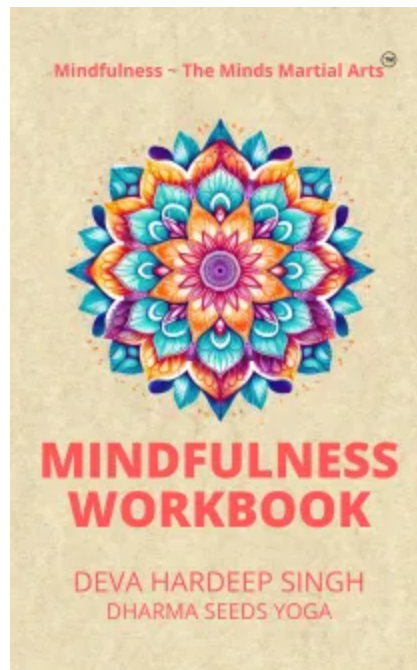
6

Take about five minutes for this exercise.

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Coming in July 2023

Mindfulness is the practice of paying attention to the present moment, without judgment. It is a way of training the mind to focus and to be aware of our thoughts, feelings, and sensations. Meditation is a form of mindfulness that involves sitting quietly and focusing on the breath. The Mind's Martial Arts™ is a mindfulness workbook that can help you to learn the basics of mindfulness and meditation. The workbook is divided into three sections:

- The first section introduces the basics of mindfulness, such as what mindfulness is, why it is beneficial, and how to get started.
- The second section provides a variety of mindfulness exercises, including guided meditations, breathing exercises, and body scans.
- The third section provides tips for integrating mindfulness into your daily life.

The Mind's Martial Arts™ is a comprehensive and easy-to-follow guide to

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healthier, and more fulfilling life. With regular practice, you can learn to control your thoughts and emotions, improve your focus, and increase your happiness



Deva Hardeep Singh (he/him; neurodivergent, gay, ability injured, post-traumatic stress injury, borderline personality injury) is an Oklahoman, a **Yuchi Indian**, enrolled in the **Muscogee Nation**, and studied radio/TV/film in college. He's worked as an on-air personality, author, poet, artist, administrative assistant, petroleum landman, barista, staff writer, paralegal, concert promoter, music artist manager, content producer, and graphic designer. He spent 6 months as a National Data Team volunteer for the Bernie Sanders for President campaign. He is a freelance journalist with International papers and magazines with a social justice focus. Recently was able to join the **Hulu/FX Series Reservation Dogs**, as an extra

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